

ANCIENT WISDOM

A monthly journal devoted to teaching theosophical and occult truths

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—Hamlet

VOLUME IX

NOVEMBER, 1943—ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

NUMBER 9

THE OCCULT STUDY OF DISEASE

By GEOFFREY HODSON

PART IV

THE MECHANISM OF DISEASE KARMA

Just as there is one basic error which is the source of all adverse karmic reaction, so is there one basic disease, which is the parent of all forms of disease. The common error, behind all errors, is that of selfishness; selfishness, in its turn, is due to a failure to recognize unity and is thus the offspring of the sense of separateness. The basic karma behind all disease karma is, therefore, produced by separateness. Separateness is the cause of all transgression, whether the karma is disease-producing or not.

Similarly there is a basic poison which produces all disease, as there is also a basic organism which is capable of transmitting disease karma to the physical body; this organism is the first dense physical agent of karma, which has acted in the subtler realms before the lower realms are reached. That basic organism is present in everyone, and is one of the fundamental constituents of which the body is built. In the case of active disease, karma, incarnate as astral and etheric poison, has impinged upon this basic body and changed it from a healthy to an unhealthy condition. The change is produced by an interference with the atomic mechanism by which the organism is brought into existence, nourished and sustained. This change affects and alters its function, so that instead of building and supporting the body it becomes injurious to it. Disease karma works similarly upon the matter of the astral and etheric bodies, changing their life units, which correspond to the basic organisms in the physical body, from healthy to unhealthy members of the bodily community. The change in astral matter automatically finds expression in etheric and finally in dense physical matter, for the astral atoms affected are the counterparts of the atoms of which the physical life units are composed. The change therefore is a natural one, and occurs in the same part of the body, in each of the three vehicles.

Karma finds its subject and produces its effects with unerring accuracy life after life. The connection between the mental, astral and physical bodies of the karma-producing incarnation, and the karmically affected bodies of subsequent incarnations, is made in the permanent atom * which is the store-

[Continued on Page 70]

*vide "A Study in Consciousness," by A. Besant.

EARTH'S NEXT CIVILIZATION

By L. W. ROGERS

[Note: Following are excerpts from a recent lecture by Mr. Rogers on some of the principles involved in changing world events.]

The principle of self government is on trial for its life. The right of the people of every nation to govern themselves is being challenged by the most powerful armies the world has ever known. In both Occident and Orient the would-be destroyers of universal liberty are entrenched. Will democracy, the principle that the people shall rule themselves, survive or perish? That is the one important thing before the world today.

Many answers are being given to that question. Some console themselves with the thought that the United Nations have greater resources than the enemy and must therefore ultimately win; but history does not show that those with the largest material possessions are always the winners in war. Others place their faith in the prophesies of gifted seers who have correctly foretold events long before they occurred, and who now say that disaster will overwhelm the arrogant enemies of universal freedom. But prophesies are often vague and very difficult to correctly interpret. There are still others who rely upon divine intervention and who feel sure that the deity would not permit the success of those who would establish world wide tyranny. Yet humanity must reap as it has sown and many a ruthless tyrant has triumphed in the past.

Such answers do not satisfy when we think of the very uncertain course of many other wars, of the great power and the terrible atrocities of the enemy, of the desperate situation of England before Russia became involved, of the fact that the economic systems and policies of the Allies are not the same and that a serious disagreement among them could lead to final defeat.

Apparently all who are seeking a satisfactory answer to this appalling problem have been looking at it from the political and military viewpoint. There is another, and totally different, approach that can and does give a satisfactory answer. It is the occult viewpoint and it is the purpose of this lecture to present it. It satisfies because it is the answer of nature herself. It does not rest upon extensive material possessions, nor upon the accuracy of somebody's prophesies, nor upon the hope of divine intervention but upon the eternal natural laws which have produced us and

[Continued on Page 71]

THE ASTROLOGICAL BASIS OF SHAKESPEARE

The Merchant of Venice: Taurus

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

That "The Merchant" is a Taurus play seems to admit of not the slightest doubt. It is all about money (Taurus). It concerns an implacable vengeance (Taurus, fixed sign). In contrast with the turbulent Macbeth, a pure Aries production, it moves in slow and rather stately tempo to its *denouement*. Here are no mad rushes of action as with the cardinal Aries. The fixed signs operate with deliberation. It has been said one can never hurry Taurus or get Aries to wait.

The central character, Shylock, is himself an obvious Taurean. He is dignified and under normal conditions courteous. Certainly he has a first-class money sense. Like a not-too-evolved Taurus he is revengeful and carries a grudge, but only after he has been hounded and goaded to it by long continued persecution.

Originally the character was played almost as a burlesque, which certainly is not the way Shakespeare intended it. Shylock was invariably portrayed as a typical stage Hebrew, with red wig and beard, enormous nose and comically violent temper. This "tickled the ears of the groundlings" who, until forty years after Shakespeare's death had never seen a Jew. They were banished from England by Edward I in 1290 and not readmitted until 1655. A few favored ones in high places may have seeped in here and there, in fact it is said that Shakespeare may have drawn the character of Shylock from one Dr. Lopez, a Jewish physician executed on suspicion of having tried to poison Queen Elizabeth. Such a figure seems far removed from Shylock who was not a physician but a banker and whose quarrel was not with royalty but with a well-to-do importer. Shylock did not try to poison anybody. His weapon was the well-known pound of flesh, which boomeranged and hit him both in the religion and the pocket-book.

It would be interesting to learn from what source Shakespeare selected so appropriate a name for his money-lender villain. Ben Jonson assures us that he had "small Latin and less Greek," so of Hebrew we may be confident he had none. Yet the word Shylock is Hebrew for cormorant, a voracious seabird, three feet in length. The word is sometimes applied to a rapacious person so its aptness is not open to question.

[Continued on Page 72]

ANCIENT WISDOM

FOUNDED BY L. W. ROGERS

published monthly at

Merchants' Exchange Bldg., St. Louis 2, Mo.

CHARLES E. LUNTZ, *Editor*

ANCIENT WISDOM PRESS, *Publishers*

Entered as second-class matter Sept. 25, 1936, at the post office at St. Louis, Missouri, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Subscriptions: 1 year \$1.25; 6 months 75c;

Canada and abroad: 1 year \$1.50.

Single copies, 15c.

A COURAGEOUS PRONOUNCEMENT BY DR. ARUNDALE

In the June *Adyar Theosophist* (page 186) Dr. George S. Arundale, International President of The Theosophical Society, replies to a letter regarding a young member. The letter to which he is replying is not reproduced but it evidently had to do with the problems posed for this young member by the widely held theosophical belief that if one is a Theosophist, young or old, one must never in any circumstances smoke, drink alcoholic liquors or eat meat, fish or poultry.

Dr. Arundale registers vigorous dissent. Says he:

"Why should she not smoke a little and drink a little and take a sandwich that might possibly have in it meat or fish, when she happens to be out among people? If she feels not to do this makes life rather more difficult for contacts with other people than she had better make the contacts in the way in which she thinks best. I say this particularly because I think it is not desirable that she should place Theosophy in all its splendor above the details of its application. Let each person apply Theosophy the best he can and if he sees no objection to smoking, drinking and a certain amount of meat and fish eating, let him go ahead and find his own way little by little."

ANCIENT WISDOM expressed almost identical views over five years ago. In an editorial in the August 1938 issue entitled "No Doctrinal Tests," we questioned the value of the well-meant attempts of members to induce fellow-Theosophists to become vegetarians against their own convictions. We pleaded that vegetarian Theosophists (as undoubtedly most of them do) should "respect the right of their fellow-members to do as they please in this as in all other matters which are their own affair." It took no particular courage for us to do this as ANCIENT WISDOM is not an official organ of The Theosophical Society and there is no "discipline" whatever that can be imposed on its editor by any theosophical body other than the Lodge of which he happens to be President and the membership of which appears to be in entire agreement with his views.

But Dr. Arundale not only goes much further than we did (in extending his views

to cover even smoking and drinking) but being in the fierce white light that beats ever upon the P.T.S., he risks an appalling amount of criticism coupled with the usual intentional misunderstanding of his statements which is the stock-in-trade of most of his perennial critics. Others who are his supporters may also find themselves shocked by the outspokenness of his opinions, but we, who agree with them in every single particular, honor him for so courageously voicing them. This is no plea for smoking, drinking or flesh-eating. Readers will certainly understand that. It is a plea for tolerance of the views of others—tolerance that we so earnestly demand for our own views. Dr. Arundale continues:

"I do not like at all that our young people should feel that Theosophy must be associated with all kinds of ideas which we may believe to be profoundly true, though whether they are or not is another question. When they themselves believe these ideas to be true, then let them hold them. Until they do, let them hold the ideas they have and believe *them* to be profoundly true."

To which we respond (in the fashion of Dr. Arundale's countrymen) "Hear! Hear!"

"I can remember the time," reminisces Dr. Arundale, "when I drank alcohol and ate meat and fish and smoked. Here I am and out of them, and I wonder whether I am a better man because of being out of them. In certain respects I may be; but in other respects I may not be."

The contrast between this "candid confession" and the sanctimonious attitude of a small section of vegetarian Theosophists who piously look down their noses at the non-vegetarians, is as great as well could be. It was a needed and wholesome declaration from the one most highly placed in our movement, and its effect should be very salutary. It will not drive any of us to drink (if we don't drink) or to smoke (if we don't smoke) or to eat meat (if we don't eat it). But it will, or should, endow us with respect (if we don't have it) for our fellow members regardless of their personal habits in these matters—habits which are strictly their own affair and have nothing in this world, or out of it, to do with us.

But Dr. Arundale has not yet finished. He has something he wants to get over and he intends to do a thorough job.

"I wonder" he continues "whether I shall be going too far if I say that there is too much teetotalism, vegetarianism and non-smoking in The Society. It is very dangerous to say this, but perhaps you see what I am driving at. There are always some people who think that if they are teetotalers, non-smokers, or vegetarians, they are gaining salvation, and they do not mind 'paying the price.' But there may be many other people, especially young people, who do not think they will gain salvation . . . should they have to invest in it by paying the price of non-smoking, teetotalism and vegetarianism."

So that our own position may not be misunderstood may we say that in our opinion it is better not to smoke than to smoke, better not to drink than to drink, better not

to eat meat, if one eats a scientifically balanced vegetarian diet, than to eat meat? But it is quite certain that the giving up of none of these things will do more than merely contribute a tiny fraction of what is required for perfection. Great and good men have indulged moderately (sometimes immoderately) in all three. Nasty little vicious men (Hitler, for instance) have abstained from all three. They were not great and good because they indulged—they are not nasty and vicious because they abstain.

Let us view these things in their proper perspective and with the breadth of vision shown by Dr. Arundale. As the vulgar saying has it, he "stuck his neck out" when he published those opinions, and there will probably be many to take a chop at it. But our guess is that it will continue to support a very level head on a capable pair of shoulders.

WHAT TO DO WITH HITLER AND MUSSOLINI

The thoughtful article by Mr. Rogers in this issue, "The Peril of Hatred," will find a responsive echo in the hearts of those who have been revolted by the fantastic suggestions for punishment to be meted out to the ringleaders of the Nazi-Fascist-Jap conspiracy against the peace of the world.

Punishment there must be, if only to act as a deterrent to similar monsters who may be encouraged to like aggression in the future should the present godless trio escape their just deserts. But it must be punishment within the realm of law and order—punishment after fair trials and by no cruel and unusual means. That it may well be capital punishment for those who have used every form of cruel and unusual execution on their own victims, may be repugnant to many Theosophists who deprecate that method of retribution, but for these heinous crimes it would seem that nothing short of the quick extermination of these inhuman creatures would meet the exigencies of the case.

The unthinking will always clamor for preposterous types of venegance. One is reminded of the cartoon in an English humorous magazine during the last war. Says Cockney lady No. 1, "That there Kaiser Willum, 'e ought to be 'anged, 'e ought, and that's a fact." "Oh, no," replies Cockney lady No. 2, "not 'angin'. 'Angin's too good for Bill. I'd cut 'im up into little pieces, with a rusty scissors, with a jagged edge."

Actually the good lady would probably be quite incapable of cutting one big piece out of Kaiser Bill, even with a nice sharp scissors. But the populace lets its imagination run riot over what it would like to do or thinks it could do to the instigators of the bloody horror we are passing through and evolves such lunacies as that mentioned by Mr. Rogers—hanging Mussolini until he is only half dead, then repeating the process so long as his wretched carcass will stand it. This is childish as well as morbid. Those who suggest it must well know it will never be heeded. For the time being Mussolini

has evaded the issue by escaping from his captors.

We are not quite sure that it was a good thing the Kaiser went virtually scot free and lived out the full tale of his years in luxury and pomp. Had he been brought to book there is at least the chance that it would have given pause to those who strove to emulate and outdo him. Perhaps not, but it is an axiom that *certainly* rather than severity of punishment is the real deterrent.

Yet Mr. Rogers' wise words against hatred are much needed in this hour when an orgy of blood-lust is sweeping the world. Cruelly wronged, incredibly persecuted peoples are likely to revert to the most primitive of all human instincts, the desire for revenge. We who have not known a tithe of their sufferings can, perhaps, enter only to a small extent into their outraged feelings. The guilty will meet their just deserts, of that we are sure, either by their own hands or at the hands of organized or unorganized justice. If the former we may trust to those who fight to uphold the basic principles of civilization not to violate them even in meting out retribution to those who have so richly deserved it. If the latter, which means that they fall into the hands of their victims, well . . . imagination reels at the prospect of what is likely to happen, but whatever it is it cannot transcend their karma. In that case it is for us not to gloat but—if we can—to pity.

THOUGHTS ON SYNDROMES

We visited our physician recently for the annual checkup. After the customary listening and recording devices had been applied to sections of torso and the usual questions asked and answered, the doctor handed us a medical journal to peruse an article dealing with the various things that happen to people at our time of life.

We read it with more or less comprehension in view of the large number of technical terms with which it was peppered. One of these terms particularly intrigued us because it appeared learnedly in nearly every other sentence, and we could not imagine what meaning it represented—the word *syndrome*. The only two nouns it suggested to us were synod and dromedary. We were quite sure it could not have anything to do with these, firstly because a dromedary (described by the dictionary as a light fleet one humped camel) would be ill at ease in a synod, which is a council of bishops or other ecclesiastical dignitaries, and secondly a synod of dromedaries could by no stretch of imagination have anything to do with whether or not we had high blood pressure.

Summoning up what little Greek we possess we recalled that the root *syn* (Greek *sun*) means together and *drom* a race or running, but we still could not make much sense out of it, so, sighing deeply at having to confess ignorance, we made the inevitable inquiry, "What is a syndrome?"

The doctor pursed his lips and looked at us rather severely as though we were not quite in order, "Oh, er," he replied, "a cycle." He gave away this professional

secret with obvious reluctance, and the article then assumed some semblance of intelligibility.

As we wandered home, after learning that there was nothing wrong with us that the next 40 or 50 years would not cure, we fell to meditating on the reason why doctors and other professional men should use obscure terms when understandable ones would as well or better convey their meaning. That syndrome thing, for instance. If it is essential that Greek be introduced, the word cycle (Greek *kuklos*, a circle) is just as Hellenic as the baffling syndrome, for which by that time we had conceived a violent dislike.

It then occurred to us that perhaps the pot was animadverting upon the blackness of the kettle. We Theosophists are by no means guiltless of this affectation. We toss Sanskrit words about when English terms would serve the purpose as well or better, and doing so often scare off good theosophical "prospects" by our dazzling erudition. The emotional world sounds much better than H.P.B.'s *kama-loca* or even our own "astral plane." The bliss of heaven is not enhanced by calling the place *devachan*. And why should the democratic old etheric double blossom out in a top hat and spats as the *linga sharira*?

Language was invented to express not to conceal thought, the diplomats to the contrary notwithstanding. We try to make ourselves understandable in ANCIENT WISDOM, but any time hereafter if we are tempted to use a Sanskrit term when an English one would do, we shall remember the syndrome and change our mind.

* * *

P.S. Upon seeing our doctor since the above was written, we mentioned the mental turmoil into which the word syndrome had thrown us. He thereupon kindly volunteered to look it up in a medical dictionary and behold it means "a complex of symptoms." "Practically a cycle," commented the doctor. Maybe Winston Churchill has something, with that Basic English idea of his.

"Does God love Hitler?" is the pointed inquiry of someone who seems to hope that the answer will be no. We have not been favored with divine information on the subject, but it is reasonable to suppose that Hitler's monad being in essence a part of God, that He does: Hitler's personality has definitely gone wrong, Hitler's ego probably is a tool of the dark forces and is destined to extinction over the ages. But Hitler's monad, the ultimate spirit, can never be annihilated. It may have to start all over again after the successive personalities have suffered for ages and even the ego perhaps has experienced the most exquisite spiritual suffering, but it can never be doomed or lost.

Modernistic artists must certainly be given credit for their strict observance of the Second Commandment: "Thou shalt not make unto thyself . . . the likeness of anything that is in the heaven above or the earth beneath or the waters under the earth."

MR. ROGERS ON "THOSE CONFLICTS"

In his "Personal Opinions" column last month, Mr. Rogers threw additional light on the question of why the style of the Mahatma Letters differs from that employed in the instruction of Krishnamurti, embodied in the booklet, "At The Feet of The Master." This does not invalidate but supplements the explanation already given and we are sure will bring comfort and peace of mind to our reader whose doubts started the discussion, if not to the professional "inconsistency" hunters.

Mr. Rogers also had something to say about that pipe the Master is supposed to have smoked. As usual he writes most informatively and gives his readers the benefit of his priceless association with the great seer, C. W. Leadbeater.

We feel a great pity for those who can find nothing in the exalted literature of Besant and Leadbeater except passages to pick out and breathlessly compare with "The Secret Doctrine" or "The Letters" in the hope that mayhap they can find something that appears to be contradictory. Pretty poor stuff, Brethren, pretty poor stuff! Surely Theosophy holds something nobler and more elevated for you than these paltry attempts to discredit teaching which thousands find so precious. What would it profit you if you succeeded? And you are not succeeding and will never succeed. You may have driven some weak ones out of the Society and away from Theosophy, but is this a matter for self-congratulation? It seems to us to be about as far removed from the true spirit of Theosophy as well could be.

Is it too much to hope that now "these, their accusers" will cease their ridiculous and futile attacks on those who have carried on and are carrying on the work so grandly initiated by Blavatsky, or are they "compulsive acts" which they just must continue even though they no longer have any meaning?

We would like to let the subject drop, wish the Blavatskyites well, continue our work in our way and very gladly and with the utmost goodwill let them continue their work in their way. We will do so if they will do likewise. But if they insist on keeping up the racket, either by correspondence or in their publications, we do not expect to fail in our self-imposed task of upholding the memory of our dead leaders and the hands of our living leaders in their great labors for the Theosophical cause.

The Blavatskyites have their right to their own beliefs and we have our right to ours. They have the right, too, to attack if they are so minded and we have the right to defense . . . and to counter-attack. We shall continue to exercise both rights if forced to it, but we earnestly hope that this unseemly controversy, for that is what it is, may now be closed.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE SIMPLY EXPLAINED

Who Copied from Whom?

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

He shines forth as the Sun, he is the Blazing Divine Dragon of Wisdom; the Eka is Chatur, and Chatur takes to itself Tri, and the Union produces the Sapta, in whom are the Seven which became the Tridasha, the Hosts and the Multitudes.

At first sight this can hardly be matched outside of "Alice in Wonderland." We are almost reminded of "Jabberwocky":

"'Twas brillig and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gymble in the wabe . . ."

However, the Stanzas have not suddenly gone "through the looking-glass." There is some very interesting nomenclature here and H.P.B. connects the first of these mysterious terms of ancient Sanskrit with ancient Hebrew in quite remarkable fashion. "Eka," says she, "is the Sanskrit for One," and One in Hebrew is Echad. Yahveh (or Jehovah) Echad—The Lord (is) One—is the great proclamation of monotheism which is the cornerstone of Hebrew belief.

But what shall we say of this amazing linking up of the 20,000 year-old Stanzas of Dzyan with the 3,000 year-old Old Testament. Who copied from whom? Is it just a coincidence that Sanskrit Eka and Hebrew Echad sound so much alike and both mean the same thing?

Well, if it is, let us go a little further, and we find another such startling coincidence. "Sapta," a word occurring a little further on, means Seven, says Blavatsky and the Hebrew for the Seventh Day is "Sabbath," from the root "Shava" or "Saba," meaning Seven. We refuse to believe that both Eka and Echad and Sapta and Saba are coincidences. They are not. Obviously the Jews obtained their two most sacred numbers from the Sanskrit, which means from India.

Interesting is the fact that Chatur (Four) and Tri (Three) have no connection whatever with the Hebrew. Neither numbers were regarded as specially holy in the sense of One (one God) and Seven (Seven Days of Creation).

We labor this point because one of the principal reasons *The Secret Doctrine* was written was to prove conclusively the great antiquity of the Eastern Wisdom, the fact that it far pre-dated all other scriptures, including the Bible, and that it was indeed the source material of most or all of the arcane Biblical teachings.

It is a far cry now to the old Church belief that God spoke Hebrew to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, which therefore would make of that tongue the oldest language on earth. Actually it is a Canaanitish dialect which the Israelites took over after conquering Palestine and adapted to their own purposes. And, as is evident, somehow the noble Sanskrit terminology has been grafted onto the original Hebrew wherever it was needed to betoken to those with learning enough to recognize, the kinship

between Indian and Hebrew esotericism.

We demonstrated rather conclusively, we think, in a prior article the relationship of the Hebrew Amen (OM-en) to the sacred word of the East, the Sanskrit OM, and commented upon the fact that whatever esotericism was absorbed or appropriated by the Jews from other sources was invariably added to or changed—apparently by way of disguise of its origin. Eka similarly becomes Echad and Sapta, Sava or Sabbath. Note in the word Sabbath the t of Sapta is retained but transposed.

Verily H.P.B. did a good job, leaving us only the task of running down the many clues she furnished. The actual meaning of this part of the Stanza—not very difficult now to decode—will form the subject of next month's article.

[To Be Continued]

"ESOTERIC GREMLINS"

Good sometimes comes out of evil in very indirect ways. Because Mrs. Luntz fell down the steps, readers are now receiving ANCIENT WISDOM about a month earlier than usual. For several years past the best the editor could do, on account of other pressing work, was to complete the paper in time for mailing about the last week of the current month. This is not good journalistic practice, it being customary for a monthly publication to appear about a week prior to the month of issue.

Without neglecting other equally important tasks, however, it seemed impossible to take the time necessary to crowd the work of two issues into the period ordinarily required for me, so that the publication date might be advanced a month.

Then the Gremlins took a hand and pushed Mrs. Luntz down the stairs. During the six weeks she was laid up the editor transferred his editorial office to her room so that he might be with her as much as possible; all social affairs and amusements were, of course, eliminated and in the time saved the publication date of ANCIENT WISDOM was first advanced to August 18th for the August issue, September 15th for the September and finally September 30th for the October number. Every effort will hereafter be made to mail the paper on the 25th of the previous month.

This, of course, is small consolation to Mrs. Luntz or the editor for the suffering she has undergone, but, at least, such as it is, it represents some residue of gain. Mrs. Luntz suggests, with this in mind, that perhaps they were "Esoteric Gremlins." Of course all gremlins are esoteric in that they contrive to remain strictly under cover, and all we have to say is that if they put us to all that trouble just to get ANCIENT WISDOM mailed a month earlier, we hope they will accomplish their beneficent ends in a more painless way next time.

Reaction of the editor to a local exhibit of so-called "Modern Art":

Any resemblance in these pictures to anything, living or dead, animate or inanimate, is purely coincidental.

INVISIBLE BUT VOCAL

An Oregon reader writes:

"I do not take the 'Canadian Theosophist' whose editor gravels you so much . . . but it looks like you were trying to paint a black cat with black paint to hide it, when it already is in a dark windowless unlighted room. You might accidentally touch the cat with the dripping brush as you make vigorous swipes around you and stride back and forth, but what good does it do? The dam feline is invisible anyway."

But very vocal. In this connection we might point out that we are no longer alone in our protests against the attitude toward respected Theosophical leaders, of the magazine referred to. The General Secretary (equivalent to President) of the English Section, Mr. John Coats, writes a restrained and dignified letter which Mr. Smythe is fair enough to reproduce, heartily disapproving of its denunciations. With it he encloses a letter from Jean Delaire, Editor of "The Christian Theosophist," who notes "with deep regret the frequency and virulence of its attacks upon fellow Theosophists of Adyar."

In our June issue we deplored the lack of official cooperation by the American Section with our efforts to combat the groundless and ill-natured assaults upon the work of Theosophical leaders. It is gratifying that others in prominent places in the movement have taken up the cudgels even before we suggested it, though we still hope that those in authority in the T.S. in our own country may decide to join in.

That the critics should be allowed free rein for their irresponsible abuse seems to us to be a reflection on the entire movement. We owe knowledge as priceless as life itself to our leaders. Should we idly stand by and see their memories defiled and dishonored, their works branded as "worthless trash" and every foul and base motive imputed to them, without stirring a finger in their defense?

It has not seemed so to us, and we know from the fine letters which have reached us, accompanied many times by donations and subscriptions for others, that a huge majority of our readers are with us.

To the few who criticize our stand, sometimes in the most personally abusive terms, (a sure sign of the weakness of their case) we say, we are sorry for you if you think your willingness to associate yourselves with attacks on the great dead is helpful to Theosophy. You have a right under the Constitution to your views and we have a right to ours. You have chosen your side and so have we, and, as the Bible aptly expresses it, "The Lord judge between us."

Hitler has produced several "secret weapons" which are giving the Allies some trouble: a rocket gun, a magnetically guided torpedo and an antitank land torpedo operated by remote control. We are willing to predict that the Allies will find an answer to all these. We also forecast that Hitler will never find an answer to what for him is the Allies' secret weapon—the righteousness of their cause.

PERSONAL OPINIONS

By L. W. ROGERS

The Peril of Hatred

How blind even the most intelligent people can be when some form of hatred fills the mind is both astonishing and sad-denying. In times like these, when such armies as the German (an army can violate international law as a citizen can the laws of his country) hang and otherwise murder civilians with no other apparent purpose than, as in Poland, exterminating them and taking over their homes and other property, it is difficult to maintain a judicial view of atrocities. Indignation swells into hatred and the average human being, with none too much emotional control in minor daily affairs, begins to think of revenge and is easily led into a dangerous state of mind that is ripe for any sort of lawless retaliation. In such a situation a great responsibility rests upon those who lead and largely shape coming events. They should advise orderly procedure.

Recently a prominent columnist and commentator has been urging that Mussolini and Hitler be shot without trial. He says in his column that among the many letters that he has received approving his proposition is one from a Mississippi editor who suggests that a better plan is to hang Mussolini as soon as our armies are in possession of Italy but to cut the rope in time to prevent death and then repeat the performance in other cities as long as any life is left in him. This plan, he thinks, will be a wholesome lesson to dictators.

That is an instructive example of what happens when we abandon law and substitute license. Once loose the latent savagery in man and there is no point beyond which it will not go. After long drawn out hanging the next step would be a proposition of death by torture instead of hanging and we would be back to the horrors of the middle ages.

Men of whatever rank or fame who are guilty of the wanton destruction of human life, whether personally or by ordering or inspiring atrocities, should be held strictly accountable but by law, whether civil or military. The United Nations, which are setting out to give the world a higher type of civilization, must exhibit a dignity in keeping with their high purpose. This war is being fought for the very purpose of forcing bandit nations to observe international law and civilized customs. How utterly absurd and grotesque it would be for the United Nations themselves to resort to lawlessness the moment they had the power!

Always when a war is in progress there are those who advocate ruthlessness. You may remember that during the first World war there was a cry from England of "hang the Kaiser!" During our American Civil war the shout of "hang Jeff. Davis" rang through the northern states and many were greatly distressed by President Lincoln's utter lack of the spirit of resentment. It is just when the multitude fails to control emotion that those who have any influence in

shaping affairs should use it to preserve balance and common sense.

Hatred in any form always reacts injuriously upon those who generate it. The desire for revenge always adds fuel to the flame of whatever antagonism exists. Those who desire to inflict vengeance always think of it as the final act in the drama, but it is far from final. It is merely another link in the chain of violence and the reaction from it is sure. There may be no obvious connection but the resulting harm will come to those responsible just as certainly as though the reaction had been immediate and direct. We should not shrink from doing fully and unhesitatingly the task of firmly establishing world peace and justice but not one step should we take outside the laws and practices that are the recognized standards of the best type of civilization.

The Broader View

Killing people for any reason whatever is something we should be leaving behind us, instead of welcoming an opportunity to take life for any reason. One difficulty about "hanging the traitors" is that time and circumstance move so swiftly that the traitors of one year may be the respected and famous rulers of some succeeding year. Had France failed to come to our assistance in 1777 with the expedition led by the gallant La Fayette, we might have lost the Revolutionary war. In that case George Washington, instead of becoming "the father of his country" would have been the arch-traitor of a rebel colony. In the preceding year if George III had had soldiers enough on American shores to catch the signers of the Declaration of Independence there is not a doubt in the world that such patriots as Franklin and Jefferson would have been promptly hanged. In the latter days of the Russian Empire men there who correspond to our Colonial patriots were being hunted down, imprisoned and hanged. One of them, who was destined to command a far more powerful army than any of the Czars ever saw and to be the national head of a greater Russia than any Czar ever dreamed, was spending far more time in prison than out of it. An encyclopedia sketch says that from 1902 to 1917 his longest period out of prison was four years. But the Czar is all but forgotten while Stalin has today probably more power and influence than any other one individual in the world. The despised rebels of one decade are often the lauded heroes of the next.

What a difference twenty or thirty years can make in world affairs! Looking back to the end of the first World war, who would now want to hang the Kaiser or even prevent his escape into Holland? In what way would anybody be the better for it? The right of asylum is one of the grandest principles of modern civilization. All governments recognize the right of asylum to refugees from other countries but have treaties with other nations under which a fugitive guilty of crime will be returned.

For many centuries asylum has been the salvation of the persecuted, and of defeated patriots and the apostles of liberty. England has a glorious record as the asylum of

fugitives from the wrath of tyranny, and some of the world's greatest patriots have spent their last days on her soil, safe from all pursuers. France, too, has been a popular asylum for men and women without a country. The more thoughtful and progressive a nation is the more firmly does it stand for the principle of asylum. America has welcomed the persecuted of all the world. The colonial foundation on which the United States was built consisted largely of people who were not wanted in their native lands. Without the right of asylum hundreds of the grandest, bravest, most self-sacrificing of human beings would have perished on the scaffold. No more crushing blow can be struck at the freedom of thought and the progress of the world than to either abolish or modify the right of asylum. Like any other good institution it may sometimes be made to serve a bad purpose but that cannot affect the fact that it is one of the most useful of civilization's humanitarian institutions.

All honor to brave little Switzerland, which has been first to reject a suggestion that the rule of asylum be suspended; and all honor to the several other nations that have made the same reply. That augurs well for the new era that lies ahead. If many stand firmly for law, order and the retention of the highest concepts the race has thus far evolved, the future is secure. But once we permit the spirit of vengeance to enter into our affairs we are headed for revolution and anarchy. The peace and security of the world depends upon the breadth of view and the emotional balance with which the new foundation is laid. Never in our era has there been a time when the supremacy of mind over emotion is worth so much.

HOROSCOPES

With regret Mr. Luntz has to announce that he will be unable to accept horoscope delineations with promise of delineation being completed before Christmas. He is deeply sorry that he must disappoint those who were looking forward to presenting these as unique gifts to relatives and friends. However, the amount of astrological work tendered to him this year has been staggering and only a part could be accepted. Most of it comes from those for whom such work has previously been done or from those recommended by them. A great deal of new work has been offered, however, by those who have read Mr. Luntz's book, "Vocational Guidance by Astrology," and have desired him to aid in their own Vocational Analysis. It is largely due to this new source of work, coupled with the ever increasing requests of former consultants, that his time has been so completely filled.

Many thanks for the great confidence shown. Perhaps after the first of the year, if not next month, a limited amount of new work may again be undertaken. No promises can be made as it will depend upon the volume of requests received between now and then, but a short announcement will be inserted when it is possible to offer the service through these columns again.

TO DOUBLE ANCIENT WISDOM'S CIRCULATION

We have been deeply gratified by the really astonishing number of subscribers who, in renewing their own subscriptions, have taken out one and sometimes several more for others.

The kindly expressions and friendly good wishes which often accompany such renewals are more heartening and encouraging than the senders may know.

We do not ask any reader to do more than he feels he is able, but those to whom Theosophy means so much constantly cast around for ways and means to bring it to others. ANCIENT WISDOM coming for one year to someone even slightly interested in these things may change the life—and the spiritual destiny.

The number of readers who have received these complimentary subscriptions and who have then renewed for themselves has never been anywhere near as large as today. We have found a positive way to increase circulation, after searching for it for years, and this is it.

A new phenomenon is lately in evidence—the complimentary subscriber renewing for himself and taking out a subscription for someone else also. There are “endless chain” possibilities in this method.

If every reader renewing for himself would subscribe for just one other, our circulation would soon double. Perhaps it is too much to hope for—or is it?

Figuring the usual number of readers per copy, to say nothing of the multiple readings our Lodge and Institution copies must receive, there is little doubt that many more people than the entire membership of The Theosophical Society in America read ANCIENT WISDOM monthly. This means that ANCIENT WISDOM is now one of the greatest theosophising agencies in this country.

But we have barely begun. A gigantic field lies before us with possibilities unlimited. That is why we ask

HELP PLEASE, IN THE WAY WE SUGGEST.

Ancient Wisdom

320 Merchants' Exchange Bldg.

St. Louis, 2, Mo.

ASTROLOGICAL BASIS OF SHAKESPEARE

[Continued from Page 65]

There is nothing of the supernatural in “The Merchant of Venice” as in other of the plays. And why should there be in a play written around an earthy sign? It might be argued that Shylock's character could well be assigned to Scorpio, but we think not. Scorpio is a death sign. Nobody died—no blood was spilled. Shylock, and everybody else, talked a lot about that pound of flesh but it remained firmly attached to Antonio to the final curtain. As a matter of fact Shylock was balked of it because he might not legally (according to the weird interpretation of Portia) shed any blood while carving it out. The law in the courtroom scene is terrible, utterly impossible in its construction as we shall show later on, but Taurus is not a legal sign and Taurus

natives as such have no special affinity for law.

Sir Henry Irving was the first great actor to portray Shylock sympathetically—to make of him a human being. Later actors followed his example and some of them, perhaps, have overdone it a little. Shylock is occasionally made to appear as a great gentleman, almost Christ-like in forbearance and humility, and his seeming bloodthirstiness toward Antonio as originally a mere gesture which later he intended to repudiate, thereby showing himself to be one of nature's noblemen. Only when he had been driven to madness by his daughter's elopement with a Christian and the family jewelry and petty cash, did his poor old brain give way and did he decide to turn his “merry sport” into a dark and devilish deed.

This is probably as far removed from Shakespeare's idea as is the burlesque

Shylock. In presenting the play we do so neither as Shylock hater nor Shylock lover. The old gentleman had plenty to turn him sour. It cannot have been pleasant to have been “spit upon on Wednesday last” or called cut throat dog on Thursday, as the good Christian Antonio was in the habit of doing to him, but we see no evidence of cheek-turning in the elderly loan shark's makeup. Yet he had his points and his moments, as we shall try to show.

So the stage is set for the entrance of Antonio and his not too bright friends in Act I, Scene I, Venice. *A Street.*

[To Be Continued]

Modernistic Art isn't so modern. It appears to have had its beginnings (and in some cases its endings) in the weird scrolls, cauliflower faces and other oddments people dash off on their scratch pads while waiting on the telephone. Mr. Deeds had a name for it when he went to town—“Doodling.”

“Mind never fails to impress itself upon matter. For every mental process there never fails to follow some physical response. Every thought of mind, every process of consciousness, is unfailingly translated into some form of material movement. This physical response to mental stimuli may be either conscious or unconscious, observed or unobserved, but none the less real.

Dr. Wm. H. Sadler
“Physiology of Faith and Fear.”

RIGHT FROM THE STORK'S MOUTH

By CHARLES E. LUNTZ

I've been away from these here parts
A thousand years or so.
Twixt Heaven and Earth, by fits and starts,
I shuttle to and fro.

Since last I incarnated here
In times pre-medieval,
There's taken place, it would appear,
Some sort of great upheaval.

For ages past I've walked afar
Or learned to ride a horse;
Now folks drive in a motor-car
(If they've got gas, of course).

Our war technique was narrow—
Just the good old-fashioned way
Of sword or bow and arrow—
But look what they do today!

For news to travel north to south
It often took a year;
Now like a flash a radio mouth
Just pours it in your ear.

Laborious writings were the means
Our thoughts and ways of giving;
But now the pictures on the screens
Are liver than the living.

But still to do my best I yearn,
Whatever is before me.
There's such a lot I have to learn,
At least life will not bore me.